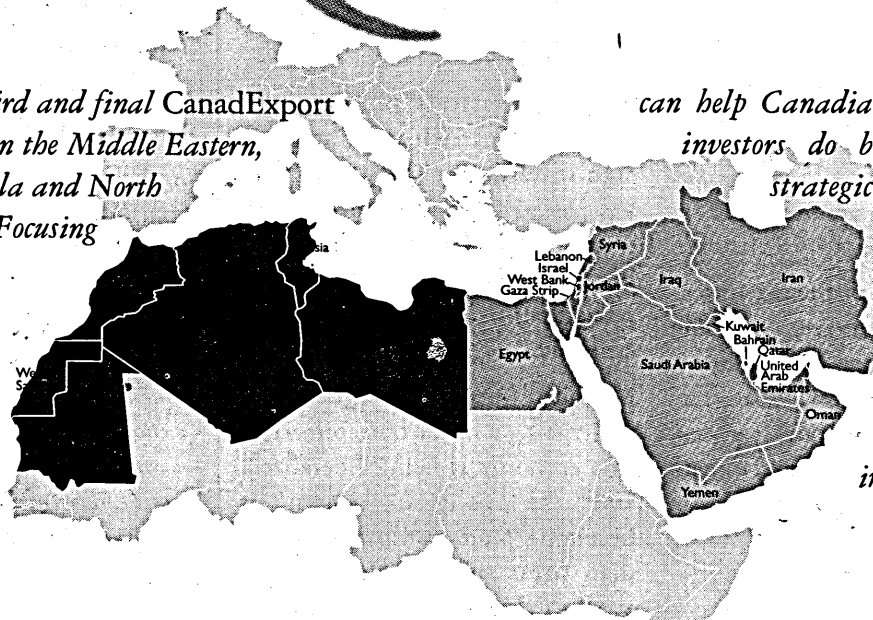


Focus on  
North Africa

*This is the third and final CanadExport supplement on the Middle Eastern, Arabian Peninsula and North African regions. Focusing on North Africa (the Maghreb), this supplement highlights the mechanisms, tools and links that*



*can help Canadian exporters and investors do business in this strategic and dynamic region. Also highlighted is the role that international financial institutions play in these regions.*

## North Africa's Untapped Potential

Good news from the five countries that make up the region — oil prices have rebounded, favouring the region's OPEC members, Algeria and Libya, whose revenues rely on oil exports. The two countries have fully rejoined the international community with the resumption of international flights to Tripoli and Algiers. The transition to a new young monarch in Morocco has proved to be a smooth one. The World Bank lauds the economic reforms undertaken by Mauritania, and Tunisia continues to post the region's most impressive economic growth rate.

Canadian exporters and investors may need to be reminded that these countries offer exceptional opportunities in many traditional and emerging sectors. Canadian companies enjoy a distinct advantage in North Africa — they have an excellent reputation due to up-to-date

technologies, competitive prices and professionalism. North Africa's French-speaking countries often look to Canada when it comes to finding suppliers that offer North American technology and services in French.

While opportunities in the oil and gas sector have always been plentiful, other sectors are now emerging as equally valuable areas for Canadian businesses to explore. For example, a number of Canadian engineering consulting companies are already active in Libyan water and electrification projects.

There is little commerce between the countries of the region, with the exception of cross-border trade

between Tunisia and Libya. Europe is the region's traditional trading partner. While Morocco and Tunisia have signed free trade agreements with the European Union (EU), the absence of trade accords with the other Maghreb countries means that Canadian products are treated on the same basis as those of their European competitors.

### Upcoming Trade Fairs

*Two major fairs taking place in Algeria are particularly valuable — the International Fair of Algiers (FIA 2000) in June 2000 and the Fourth Scientific and Technical Days (JST 2000) in April, organized by Sonatrach. Companies interested in the telecommunications sector should consider Telecom Maghreb in Morocco, April 4-7, and agri-food exporters can meet potential joint-venture partners at Agro-Leader 2000 in Tunisia, April 26-30.*

prepared by the Maghreb and Arabian Peninsula Division



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